



# THE IRAQI ELECTIONS: *Initial Results*

*"Our expectations have been exceeded."*

– Dr. Farid Ayar, Commissioner, Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq

*"Today the people of Iraq have spoken to the world, and the world is hearing the voice of freedom from the center of the Middle East."*

– President George W. Bush



**I**N LARGE NUMBERS AND AT GREAT PERSONAL RISK, the Iraqi people demonstrated their commitment to democracy during elections on January 30. In a historic accomplishment, they voted for a Transitional National Assembly, provincial councils, and a Kurdistan regional government. Iraqi officials organized the election and Iraqi security forces protected the polling places.

## Voting Highlights

- 5,216 polling centers were opened on election day.
- The Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq has announced it will release results within 10 days.
- More than 265,000 Iraqis participated in the Out-of-Country Voting (OCV) program, held in 14 countries worldwide. This figure represents nearly 94% of those who registered to vote outside of Iraq.
- The election was transparent. Voting centers allowed local observers from non-governmental organizations, political organizations, and parties to observe voting and the counting of ballots.
- The ballots have been counted in local polling centers and the vote tally sheets are being transferred to Baghdad where election staff are verifying and inputting the results. All ballots will be transported to the Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq headquarters in Baghdad where they may be recounted in the event of complaints or discrepancies.
- After the results are certified and the winners declared, the Transitional National Assembly will be seated to start the process of drafting Iraq's new constitution.
- According to the Preliminary Report of the International Mission for Iraqi Elections, "Iraq's Electoral Commission

has prepared and put in place a framework for an election that generally meets recognized standards in terms of election law, planning, and preparations."

## Continued Assistance

- The elections were a first step in a year-long process to stand up a new government, ratify a constitution and hold elections for a new government under a permanent constitution.
- Iraqis continue to face many difficult challenges, but the United States and its Coalition partners are committed to supporting them in their efforts.

## WHAT'S NEXT?

### February - March 2005

- A 275-member Transitional National Assembly (TNA) will be seated.
- Transitional National Assembly elects the Presidency Council - a President and two Vice-Presidents.
- Presidency Council unanimously selects Prime Minister.
- Cabinet ministers will be appointed by the Presidency Council at the recommendation of the Prime Minister.
- The Transitional National Assembly, by a majority vote, will approve the Prime Minister and his or her cabinet.

### October 2005

- National referendum on new permanent constitution drafted by Transitional National Assembly.

### December 2005

- Iraqi people elect new government under the permanent constitution.